# Integrated Country Strategy

# Israel

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

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Approved: August 29, 2018

## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Through 70 years of the U.S.-Israel relationship, our countries have developed unbreakable bonds through cooperation in security, economics and business, scientific research and innovation, and people-to-people exchanges. Mission Israel is first and foremost committed to strengthening and enhancing these bonds. U.S. support for Israel derives from our shared values: freedom, democracy, and independence. Support for Israel is a quintessential American value, and America is at its best when it supports Israel.

Our core priorities seek to strengthen the U.S. and Israel relationship. Firstly, we will promote a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Peace is a core American value and a core Israeli value. We will help create conditions for peace by pushing both sides to look toward the future, rather than at historic narratives and grievances. We will oppose efforts to isolate or delegitimize Israel through actions at the United Nations and other international organizations. We will also encourage increased cooperation between Israel and the Arab states in the region to promote both a lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and long-term prosperity, stability, and security in the region. Israel and its Arab neighbors have common threats and shared interests; increased cooperation in the region will not only benefit Israel but also the United States, as we seek to broaden our coalition of partners committed to stamping out extremism and violence.

We will strengthen our bilateral security cooperation, understanding that for Israel to live in peace, it must be strong. Our bedrock commitment to Israel's security is manifest in our robust foreign military financing (FMF) program, in helping maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge, and in cutting-edge cooperation on missile defense. We will continue our close military and intelligence coordination, which benefits both Israel and the United States.

We will work to expand and strengthen U.S.-Israel economic and commercial relations that create and support U.S. jobs, contribute to U.S. competitiveness, and promote Israeli security and peace in the region. Building on the fundamentals of the 1985 U.S.-Israel Free Trade Area Agreement, we will seek a more level playing field for U.S. business, encouraging more U.S. exporters to do business in Israel and Israelis to invest in the United States. Continued close cooperation on scientific, energy, and environmental issues will provide multiple benefits to the United States,including job creation, export opportunities and investments. Additionally the Mission will promote entrepreneurship and tech education as avenues to greater prosperity among women and minority sectors in Israel.

We will strengthen our bilateral law enforcement cooperation and enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to protect the U.S. and Israeli home fronts. The United States and Israel both seek to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat terrorist organizations and violent extremists organizations in our respective countries, regionally, and globally.

We will also promote U.S. commercial interests in Israel and Israeli investment in the United States; protect the welfare of the more than 500,000 U.S. citizens in Israel; work with the Israeli government and non-governmental organizations to advance equal rights and opportunities for all of Israel's citizens; and carry out robust public messaging of U.S. views and policies.

Mission Israel will continue to provide essential backing to the Secretary of State, the National Security Council, and the U.S. Security Coordinator, as well as support to frequent Executive Branch and Congressional visits. We will advance U.S. interests by engagement with Israelis throughout government, the military, civil society, religious communities, and the private sector. We will prioritize contact with all segments of Israel's diverse population.

Finally, we will work to identify a site and begin planning for a new, permanent Embassy Jerusalem compound that will reflect our enduring commitment to and friendship with Israel and serve as a symbol for peace in the region. We will also identify a site in Tel Aviv for a relocated Branch Office or Consulate General, which will provide a modern and secure platform for our diplomatic work.

## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1**: **Promote a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.**

**Mission Objective 1.1**: Engage with Israeli government and civil society partners and the International Community to prepare the groundwork for a renewed peace process.

**Mission Objective 1.2**: Work with our partners throughout the region to foster increased cooperation between Israel and the Arab states.

**Mission Goal 2**: **Enhance Bilateral and Regional Security Cooperation – Military to military engagement, counterterrorism and nonproliferation coordination, and missile defense cooperation – to bolster the United States' and Israel's security and regional security and stability.**

**Mission Objective 2.1**: Enhance Israel's capabilities and strengthen our military to military partnerships to combat terrorism and extremism, and prevent Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation in support of the United States' and Israel's security and regional stability.

**Mission Goal 3**: **Strengthen the U.S.-Israel bilateral economic relationship and support Israeli-Palestinian economic engagement.**

**Mission Objective 3.1**: Increase U.S. economic cooperation with Israel, including U.S. exports to Israel and Israeli direct investment in the Uunited States.

**Mission Objective 3.2**: Support partnerships between Israel and its neighbors (particularly the Palestinians, Egypt, and Jordan) in economic, scientific, and natural resource sectors in order to advance regional stability.

**Mission Goal 4**: **Deter terrorism and criminal activity in Israel and promote collaboration with USG law enforcement agencies to enhance local and regional security.**

**Mission Objective 4.1**: Enhance local law enforcement capabilities and increase liaison with Israeli law enforcement and security agencies to ensure efficient conduct and conclusive outcomes on a wide variety of investigative matters.

**Mission Goal 5**: **Protect U.S. citizens and their interests abroad and and fully vet all visa applicants.**

**Mission Objective 5.1**: Safeguard U.S. citizens in Israel.

**Mission Objective 5.2:** Fully vet all visa applicants that wish to travel to the United States.

**Management Objective 1**: Further advance the President's directive that recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moved the Embassy from Tel Aviv by identifying sites and planning for a new permanent Embassy Jerusalem and a new Branch Office/Consulate General in Tel Aviv.

## 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1:** Promote a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

**Description and Linkages:** The United States has steadfastly worked to strengthen Israel's security, including through seeking a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Our commitment to facilitating a comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict is a top foreign policy priority of the administration as identified in the National Security Strategy (NSS). As the NSS states, we recognize that Israel is not the prime irritant preventing peace and prosperity in the region: "States have increasingly found common intersts with Israel in confronting common threats." In December 2017, the President recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and announced that the United States would move its Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This long-overdue step was aimed to advance the peace process by creating new opportunities for peace.

The Ambassador is the Administration's primary interlocutor with the Israeli government on this issue, supported by various Embassy sections and agencies. The Embassy hosts visits and high-level engagement by White House and senior cabinet officials and members of Congress on this issue. USAID's and the Public Diplomacy (PD) section's people-to-people projects build mutual understanding and trust between Israelis and Palestinians and between Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel as a way to strengthen the foundation for a negotiated peace agreement. USAID- and PD-administered grants under the Conflict Management and Mitigation program and the Middle East Partnership Initiative connect disparate groups across Israeli and Palestinian societies.

**Mission Objective 1.1:** Engage with Israeli government and civil society partners and the international community to prepare the groundwork for a renewed peace process.

**Justification:** To achieve a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Israeli government and civil society actors will need to create the conditions in Israel to support negotiations and an eventual agreement and to foster economic and political development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. High-level engagement by White House and State Department officials is essential to encourage both sides to undertake confidence-building measures. Key non-government stakeholders in Israel, including the Quartet, other relevant foreign missions, international organizations, and key elements of civil society can be instrumental in building support for a lasting solution to the conflict. Risks associated with not achieving this Mission Objective include resistance in Israeli society to a negotiated outcome to the conflict, endangering the overall success of the Administration's efforts.

**Mission Objective 1.2** Work with our partners throughout the region to foster increased cooperation between Israel and the Arab states.

**Justification:** Israel and its Arab neighbors share more and more mutual interests and common threats. Arab countries' leadership will be an important element in the development of a comprehensive and lasting peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. As Israel and its Arab neighbors increasingly work together to confront their common threats, a stronger basis for increased cooperation throughout all sectors will develop. Risks involved with not achieving this Mission Objective include continued regional tensions and possible re-entrenchment of Israeli isolation.

**Mission Goal 2:** Enhance bilateral and regional security cooperation – military to military engagement, counterterrorism and nonproliferation coordination, and missile defense cooperation – to bolster the United States' and Israel's security and regional security and stability.

**Description and Linkages:** The United States' security relationship with Israel is second to none. With Israel facing threats from Iran, terrorist organizations, and regional actors, this relationship is critical to diplomatic engagement to de-escalate tensions, the security of Israel's borders, the protection of Israel's residents, the prevention of a wide-scale regional conflict; and the security of our own homeland. The NSS identifies security cooperation with Israel as a top priority.

To enhance security in Israel and the region, we jointly coordinate counterterrorism, missile defense, and nonproliferation strategies. We maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge via bilateral security dialogues and a broad spectrum of military engagement. We ensure accurate messaging to the media on the enduring U.S. commitment to Israel's security through press engagements for visiting senior U.S. officials and Embassy leadership.

**Mission Objective 2.1** Enhance Israel's capabilities and strengthen our military to military partnerships to combat terrorism and extremism, and prevent WMD proliferation in support of the United States' and Israel's security and regional stability.

**Justification:** The United States has a lasting commitment to Israel's security, embodied in our second 10-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) on foreign military financing (FMF), which will provide Israel with $3.8 billion annually in FMF and missile defense assistance, starting in Fiscal Year 2019. While the MOU underpins our security relationship, our cooperation extends to all areas of Israel and the United States' security sector, enhancing not only Israeli security but also the United States' security.

**Mission Goal 3:** Strengthen the U.S.-Israel Bilateral Economic Relationship and Support Israeli-Palestinian Economic Engagement.

**Description and Linkages:** Embassy Jerusalem will engage with the Israeli government and private sector to expand bilateral economic cooperation, grow U.S. exports to Israel, and attract job-creating Israeli direct investment in the United States, all in support of the Administration's a core priority of promoting American prosperity as outlined in the NSS. We also pursue Israeli-Palestinian economic engagement, and work with the Israeli government and the private sector to support economic and environmental partnerships between Israel and its neighbors.

**Mission Objective 3.1** Increase U.S. economic cooperation with Israel, including U.S. exports to Israel and Israeli direct investment in the United States.

**Justification:** The Mission will work to expand and strengthen U.S. - Israel economic and commercial relations that create and maintain U.S. jobs, contribute to U.S. competitiveness, and support Israeli security and peace in the region. Building on the fundamentals of the 1985 U.S.-Israel Free Trade Area Agreement, the Mission will seek a more level playing field for U.S. business and encourage more U.S. exporters to do business in Israel, and Israeli investors to do business in the United States. Promoting regulatory transparency and supporting reform in areas such as agricultural trade policies, intellectual property rights, standards, and investment regulation remain priorities. Continued close cooperation on scientific, energy, and environmental issues provides multiple benefits to the United States, including job creation, export opportunities and investments. R&D cooperation yields substantial opportunities for U.S. companies interested in commercializing results of joint research, including in space and life sciences, cyber security, and alternative energy. Through increased exchanges on policy and technical assistance, we will assist Israel in building an energy regulatory regime and commercial energy sector that develops Israel's hydrocarbon and renewable energy resources in ways that are environmentally responsible, maximize Israel's security, and provides U.S. energy firms with significant job-creating investment and trade opportunities. Additionally the Mission will promote entrepreneurship and tech education as avenues to greater prosperity among women and minority sectors in Israel.

**Mission Objective 3.2** Support partnerships between Israel and its neighbors (particularly the Palestinians, Egypt, and Jordan) in economic, scientific, and natural resource sectors in order to advance regional stability.

**Justification:** The Embassy encourages greater Israeli efforts to support the development of Palestinian institutions and to promote Palestinian economic growth and resource cooperation. We back formal and informal dialogues with the U.S., Israeli, and Palestinian governments and private sectors to promote a more self-sustainable and independent Palestinian economy. We also support increases economic linkages between Israel and its neighbors, particularly in the area of trade, water, and energy.

**Mission Goal 4:** Deter terrorism and criminal activity in Israel and promote collaboration with USG law enforcement agencies to enhance local and regional security.

**Description and Linkages:** Mission Israel's law enforcement agencies work jointly with the Government of Israel to promote the President's strategic goal to *Protect the American People, the Homeland and the American Way of Life.* Post's USG law enforcement presence includes Diplomatic Security's Regional Security Office which includes an Assistant Regional Security Officer-Investigator (ARSO-I), the FBI's Legal Attaché office (LEGAT), Force Protection Detachment (FPD), and the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (DHS/ICE), which includes a Visa Security Unit (VSU). These agencies coordinate with the Governent of Israel in cases ranging from terrorism, visa fraud, money-laundering, organized crime, drug trafficking, extraditions and deportations, and requests for judicial assistance.

**Mission Objective 4.1** Enhance local law enforcement capabilities and increase liaison with Israeli law enforcement and security agencies to ensure efficient conduct and conclusive outcomes on a wide variety of investigative matters.

**Justification:** Given the large number of American citizens resident in Israel, Israeli activity in the United States and the close and cordial relationship that exists between our two nations, the USG and Governent of Israel share many common interests and mutual concerns requiring the efficient conduct and conclusive outcome on a wide variety of investigative matters, to include fraud, criminal, immigration, taxes, customs, intelligence, and counter terrorism matters. The USG and Governent of Israel share common interest in our respective countries, in the region and globally to disrupt, dismantle and defeat terrorist organizations and violent extremists organizations. The USG and Governent of Israel further share many common law enforcement interests requiring cooperation by furthering relationships, exchanging information, expanding cooperation on matters of intelligence, law enforcement and security cooperation, providing timely training opportunities, and fostering collaboration with Israel to improve law enforcement cooperation throughout the region.

**Mission Goal 5:** Protect U.S. citizens and their interests abroad and fully vet all visa applicants.

**Description and Linkages:** More than 500,000 U.S. citizens are resident in Israel; in addition, approximately 800,000 U.S. citizens visited Israel in 2017. The Consular Sections ensure that U.S. citizens living or traveling in Israel have access to the latest credible threat information in a timely manner in accordance with the "no double standard" principle. Consular staff handles a large volume of services for U.S. citizens at Embassy Jerusalem, Branch Office Tel Aviv, and at the Consular Agency in Haifa, and accepts citizenship and passport requests at numerous roadshows throughout the year. Together with on-site DHS VSU and ARSO-I units in both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, Visa Unit staff coordinate efforts with other Embassy sections and local law enforcement and security agencies to ensure that known and suspected terrorists and criminals do not receive visas. Specifically, this goal relates to pillar one of the NSS, *protect the American people, the Homeland, and the American Way of Life,* and to pillar two of the NSS, *promote American prosperity*, by facilitating legitimate travel for tourists,

businesspeople, and students; screening out travelers who wish to harm the United States; encouraging investment in the United States through the E2 visa program ($210 million dollars in the first six months of 2018 and expected to increase); and ensuring that all U.S. citizens are aware of security threats and have valid travel documents at all times.

**Mission Objective 5.1** Safeguard U.S. citizens in Israel.

**Justification:** More than 500,000 U.S. citizens reside in U.S. Embassy Jerusalem's consular district and hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens visit each year. These citizens rely on a variety of services including passports, reports of birth abroad, notarials, and other special services. Residents and visitors to the district are subject to a dynamic security situation. Protecting these citizens and keeping them informed are key priorities of the Embassy.

**Mission Objective 5.2:** Fully vet all visa applicants that wish to travel to the United States.

**Justification:** The Embassy's visa services fully vet all potential travelers to the United States, which protects our borders from terrorists and criminals. Effective and efficient visa processing is key as visa demand continues to grow at a rapid pace. This includes protecting U.S. security and immigration interests while managing customer satisfaction.

## 4. Management Objectives

**Management Objective 1** Further advance the President's directive that recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moved the Embassy from Tel Aviv by identifying sites and planning for a new permanent Embassy Jerusalem and a new Branch Office/Consulate General in Tel Aviv.

**Justification:** In December 2017, President Trump officially recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and directed the Department to relocate the Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. To expedite the move, the Department implemented a multi-phased approach. The first phase, which converted the existing Consulate General Jerusalem consular operations building at Arnona into an interim Embassy Jerusalem, opened on May 14, 2018. The second phase, planned for completion by fall 2019, expands the Arnona facility and includes physical security upgrades to the compound.

For the final phase, the Department plans to build a permanent New Embassy Compound (NEC) in Jerusalem. At the same time, the Embassy Branch Office Tel Aviv, which may become a Consulate General when the NEC opens, requires a new facility. Built in 1957, the aging Tel Aviv office building does not meet Diplomatic Security standards.

The Embassy is actively working with NEA, OBO, and M/PRI to project staffing and space needs to inform a Space Requirements Program that will effectively distribute functions and staffing between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv for all agencies. During this ICS period, Embassy Management will work with OBO to acquire sites in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv to provide the safe, secure, and functional platform required to achieve Mission Goals and Objectives.

Risks associated with not achieving this Management Objective include delayed opportunities for cost savings and efficiencies related to consolidation of programs, personnel, and management and security platforms across the Mission. In addition, employees in Tel Aviv continue at risk by working in a building that does not meet current security standards.